

Put these pieces together to discover what it means to be a Hoosier.

By Sally Campbell Grout

Other than a shared ability to understand our own time zones, the people of Indiana are a pretty diverse lot. Travel to these Indiana locations to see a range of ethnic heritage, artistic endeavors, architectural styles, and unique celebrations that work well together to make one fun-to-visit state.

**Celebrating with song.**

Across the state, you'll find Hoosiers who love to make a joyful noise, and nowhere do they do that more proudly and clearly than at Gaither Family Resources in Alexandria (800-520-4664). Gospel music fans have long enjoyed Bill and Gloria Gaither's work. Today, at Gaither Family Resources, you can visit 17 "life centers" where you can shop for unique gifts and books, find the resources and the inspiration to write music or words, discover the uplifting Homecoming Video series, learn ways to simplify your life, and even enjoy a latte, among other activities.

**Art on the wall and on the street.**

Any time you visit the Fort Wayne Museum of Art (260-422-6467) you'll see something incredible. The more than 1,300 objects in the permanent collection focus on European and American paintings, sculptures, and works on paper created since 1850, and includes paintings by George Inness, Eastman Johnson, and Maurice de Vlaminck. The museum also owns a large number of Amish quilts made in northeastern Indiana. However, along with its permanent works, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art presents an interesting range of national traveling exhibits and once-a-year events. Among them: Main Street Chalk Walk, which takes place this July 10-11. In this annual community event, artists of all ages and abilities fill Main Street with beautiful, colorful works of temporary art. Families are welcomed and encouraged to draw together. Pre-registration is required if you want to be assured an 8' x 8' space; however, some spaces may be available on a first-come, first-served basis during the event.

**An ever-changing capital city.**

The state's range of activities is certainly reflected in its capital city, Indianapolis (800-238-INDY). Once known primarily as a sports town, Indianapolis is quickly gaining recognition for its commitment to the arts. In 2003, the city launched the Cultural Districts Program, acknowledging five unique areas--neighborhoods, really--that celebrate the arts in their own ways.

Mass Ave Arts & Theatre District offers live theater, art galleries, shops, and restaurants nestled among historic downtown neighborhoods. Historic

Central Canal and White River State Park lines some of the city's larger attractions along a sparkling canal that stretches through the western end of downtown. Some of those attractions include the Indianapolis Zoo & White River Gardens, the Indiana State Museum, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, and the NCAA Hall of Champions. Fountain Square puts a vintage spin on things, with a 1950s style diner and soda fountain, duckpin bowling, more than 200 antique dealers, and the redeveloped 1928 Fountain Square Theatre Building. Broad Ripple Village skews to the young and young at heart, with shops, arts, and music venues which give up and coming bands and artists a places to perform. The Downtown Wholesale District is Indianapolis at its lit up best, with shopping, restaurants, cultural events and accommodations within walking distance of each other.

In 2004, a sixth district was added to the list: Indiana Avenue, a destination with a rich history. In the 1930s and 40s, jazz clubs here welcomed legendary performers such as Lionel Hampton and Count Basie.

#### **An artists' gathering place.**

Did you ever hope to take home a souvenir or remembrance from a place you've visited—only to find the same mass produced items you have at home? That won't happen when you visit The Village at Winona (574-268-9888). In this charming lakeside community, shop for original artworks in pottery, cut glass, fabric, furniture and paintings at Artisan Court, a series of unique shops, studios, galleries, and one-of-a-kind cafes. Historically, The Village at Winona was once known as "America's Christian Vacationland" and part of that history is still visible. The Billy Sunday Home Museum and Visitors Center (877-786-3292), a 1911 Arts and Crafts-style bungalow, was the residence of the one-time pro baseball player who became a well-known evangelist. Note the needlework and paintings; Mrs. Sunday completed much of the work herself.

#### **Wear comfy shoes.**

Leisurely Saturday afternoons were made for towns like Rising Sun (812-438-2750). Recently named as a Governor's Arts Award winner, Rising Sun offers a variety of galleries, shops, and restaurants, plus a panoramic river walk. The shops along Main Street entice you with charming names such as Jim & Betty's Crafts, Endearing Bookworm, and Wheelhouse Antiques. Among the other spots not to miss: The Ohio County Historical Museum (812-438-4915), featuring a 1920s race boat; and Rising Sun Pendleton Art Center (812-438-9900), which features a fine art gallery, 25 artists studios, special exhibitions and workshops.

#### **Where art and architecture are one in the same.**

The people of Columbus, Indiana would be the first to admit that their Midwest hometown, population 39,000, is an unusual place to find so much world-renowned architecture. Perhaps that's why they're so willing to share it with you. The Columbus Area Visitors Center (800-468-6564) conducts one- and two-hour tours; or, you can take a self-guided walking or driving tour. However you choose to tour Columbus, you'll see incredible structures by names any architecture aficionado will recognize, such as Harry Weese, Richard Meier, and I.M. Pei. All that touring is bound to leave you wanting a snack. Consider a stop at Zaharako's Confectionery (812-379-9329), a favorite ice cream, lunch and candy destination for more than 100 years.

### **Where a plate is the canvas.**

Hoosiers frequently express themselves through the art of food, whether it's fine and fancy or deep-fried. The Triple XXX Family Restaurant, Since 1929 (765-743-5373), in West Lafayette, is Indiana's first and oldest drive-in restaurant. Put it in park to sample pork barbeque, pork tenderloins, Triple XXX root beer and 100% sirloin burgers. Starting the day at an odd hour? No problem. The Triple XXX serves breakfast 24 hours a day.

It's not hard to guess what the featured menu item is at the Beef House (765-793-3947) in Covington. But what may come as a surprise is that this restaurant was voted Indiana's best steakhouse. Almost Home in Greencastle (765-653-5788) offers "Midwestern comfort food," but whatever you do, save room for the desserts. They're award winning. And if your sweet tooth still isn't satisfied, consider a trip to Wolf's Homemade Candies in Attica (888-98-CANDY), where they've been fulfilling the area's chocolate cravings for 75 years.

### **Now that's planning ahead.**

Talk about a long-term plan. Phil Etienne's Timber Harvest in Bear Hollow (812-843-5208) is a logging and sawmill business that also takes the steps for birth and re-growth of trees so the forest will keep producing wood for the future. In the meantime, they're doing some pretty incredible things with that wood now at their Bear Hollow Wood Shop. In it, you'll find chainsaw sculptures, custom-made garden benches, Cedar furniture, birdhouses and other items. And here's what's really remarkable: the Bear Hollow Wood Shop carvers who make the shop's items all work at Etienne's sawmill and carve in their spare time.

### **Hopeful Hoosiers.**

The idea of utopian life may strike most of the world as unrealistic, but here in Indiana folks have tried it twice—in the same place. In 1814, a group of separatists from the German Lutheran Church settled to create their ideal community. Before returning to Pennsylvania 10 years later,

they built the town of New Harmony. In 1925, social philosopher Robert Owen bought the town for a second experiment in communal living. Today, New Harmony is credited with having a profound influence on America's public education, architecture, and women's suffrage.

A walking tour of Historic New Harmony (800-231-2168) starts at the Antheneum/Visitor's Center, and takes you to the 1819 Harmonists Home and the Harmonists Community House. Other incredible sites to see include the Roofless Church, formal and casual gardens, and the hedge labyrinth, which, to Harmonists, symbolized life's journey to true harmony and perfection.

**What else can Hoosiers do?**

To find out more about the people and places that make Indiana unique, visit [enjoyindiana.com](http://enjoyindiana.com).